



BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
Office of the Secretary
Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110
Telephone (505) 827-2855
Fax (505) 827-2836



RON CURRY
SECRETARY

DERRITH WATCHMAN-MOORE
DEPUTY SECRETARY

August 21, 2003
Immediate Release

Contact: Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director
Phone: (505) 827-0314

Public Invited to Open House on Smoke Management

(Santa Fe, NM) — In order to better familiarize the public with its proposed smoke management program, its origins, its requirements, and its long-term benefits to New Mexico's air quality, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is hosting an open house Thursday, August 28 from 2:00 to 7:00 pm at the Air Quality Bureau's conference room, 2052 Galisteo Street, Santa Fe.

The New Mexico Smoke Management Program has been developed in response to federal and state air quality requirements, and will apply to all vegetative burns of over 10 acres (or 1,000 cubic feet of pile volume). NMED, working with a diverse group of stakeholders including federal and state land managers, ranchers, farmers, and environmental interests, developed the Smoke Management Program over a six-month period.

"From Zozobra to ranchland, burning has a rich heritage in the State of New Mexico," said Sandra Ely, Chief of NMED's Air Quality Bureau. "For this reason we solicited input from a broad segment of New Mexico's burn community in developing this program. We feel that this has led to a fair and reasonable program that meets the needs of New Mexico's farm and ranch interests while keeping our air clean and healthy."

Air Quality Bureau staff and representatives from the Smoke Management Program workgroup will be available at the open house to explain the program and respond to questions.

The open house is one in a series of public outreach events that will take place in New Mexico on the Regional Haze plan and associated Smoke Management Program. The Environmental Improvement Board will review the program at public hearings on November 17, 18 and 19, 2003.

For more information, contact Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

###